

A TRIBUTE TO ROOT, INC. FOUNDER KENNETH E. BARNES, SR. IN PRAISE OF HIS U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AWARD FOR HIS DEDICATED ADVOCACY ON BEHALF OF VICTIMS OF CRIME

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Mr. RUSH. Madam Speaker, today I would like to recognize an outstanding American who has worked tirelessly to stem the tide of youth violence that has gripped many communities in our country. Kenneth E. Barnes, Sr., M.S., attended Loyola College in Maryland and, while working towards his doctoral degree, tragedy of the worst kind struck—his son, Kenneth Barnes, Jr., was murdered. Rather than do nothing, Mr. Barnes established the organization Reaching Out to Others Together Inc., or ROOT, Inc.

ROOT, Inc. is a non-profit organization committed to advocacy, education and intervention on behalf of victims of gun violence and their families. ROOT, Inc.'s mission is to motivate and mobilize communities to take a proactive approach in reducing homicides as well as the senseless gun violence and youth violence that plague cities throughout America. Mr. Barnes has conducted workshops and seminars, locally and nationally, as well as testified on numerous occasions before the D.C. City Council. Mr. Barnes has also worked with my office and played an instrumental role in helping me to draft the Communities in Action Neighborhood Defense and Opportunity Bill, or CAN DO bill, which also addresses the issue of gun violence through a community-based comprehensive approach to the problem.

Madam Speaker, each April since 1981, the Office for Victims of Crime within the U.S. Department of Justice has helped lead communities throughout the nation in their observances of National Crime Victims' Rights Week. Rallies, candlelight vigils, and a host of commemorative activities are held each year to promote victims' rights and to honor crime victims and those who advocate on their behalf.

This year, Kenny Barnes has been nominated by the United States Department of Justice Office of Victim Services to receive the National Service Award for his work on behalf of victims of crime and he will receive this prestigious award on April 24, 2009. This is a great honor being bestowed upon a great man and I would like to congratulate Mr. Barnes for his commitment and dedication to an issue that is so dear to my heart and the hearts of millions of others throughout our nation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND CONGRATULATORY REMARKS FOR BROOKLYN COLLEGE ACADEMY HIGH SCHOOL BOBCATS BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Ms. CLARKE. Madam Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Brooklyn College Academy High School Bobcats basketball team on win-

ning the 2009 PSAL Brooklyn West B Division title. On March 27, 2009, co-coaches Alicia Braswell and Paul Wallace inspired their team, which was ranked 26th out of 38 through the bottom half of the bracket to the finals and the win. What makes this win not only inspiring but historic is that it is the first time a female coach has ever led a team to the men's division title in the history of the tournament. Players Keyon Aigle, Christoph Bristol, Denzel Duchenne, Craig Gooden, Lesner Guerrier, Jamaal James, Raheem Mack, Jaren Mansano, Kristian Moreno, Alexandre Pages, Jose Perez, Tarik Phillip, Onyma Utti, and Equipment Manager Cassandra Mark played the Brooklyn way and deserved the admiration of all of us here. Principal Nick Mazzarella also deserves our respect and admiration for selecting a female coach to help guide his school to the title. This progressive and forward-thinking approach to athletic hiring has paid dividends not only for the Bobcats, but is also another step forward in the fight for gender equality in athletics. I am proud and deeply honored to represent Brooklyn College Academy High School and provide it as an example to all of what's possible when playing fields are leveled and all are given an opportunity to excel regardless of gender.

RECOGNIZING THE METROPOLITAN EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION CENTER

HON. PATRICK J. TIBERI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Mr. TIBERI. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise to recognize the grand opening of the Metropolitan Emergency Communication Center (MECC). This new center represents the commitment the participants of six fire departments in Central Ohio have had to serving their communities. This innovative center serves Mifflin, Plain, Jefferson, Truro, and Violet Townships as well as the City of White Hall.

The state-of-the-art communications center opened on April 16, 2009 in Gahanna, Ohio. This multi-jurisdictional emergency dispatch center for Fire, Rescue and EMS serves six fire departments and assists over 120,000 Central Ohioans. In 2008, the MECC handled over 27,000 calls for fire and EMS service. The opening of this new facility for the MECC offers room for training, meetings, additional consoles, upgraded technology, and on-site IT support.

This partnership improves efficiency, enhances capabilities, and shares technology to better serve our community. Emergency responders have access to the resources they need to best do their jobs because of the innovative approach to dispatching the Metropolitan Emergency Communication Center has taken. The MECC allows all six participating fire departments to stay on the cutting edge of technological developments to better execute emergency runs and to serve our Central Ohio community.

I offer my congratulations to the six communities that comprise the Metropolitan Emergency Communication Center and I applaud their hard work and dedication to preserving the safety of Central Ohioans.

SPEAK OUT AGAINST GENOCIDE

HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, April is Genocide Prevention Month. Tuesday, April 21st, marked Holocaust Remembrance Day. Tomorrow, April 24th, is the 94th anniversary of the onset of the Armenian genocide. These times of commemoration are sobering, but I firmly believe that it is important to pause and recall the unnecessary deaths of millions of people which occurred in the last century. By reminding ourselves of past atrocities, we are encouraged to uphold the value of human life today.

During World War I, the Turkish government began an assault on the Armenian people by arresting and killing religious, political, and intellectual leaders in Istanbul. Then, groups of Armenian men, women, and children were rounded up and forced to march through the desert. Along the way, the victims were tortured, raped, and starved.

Before and during World War II, Adolph Hitler attempted to eliminate the Jewish people and others whom he considered a threat. He initiated boycotts of Jewish businesses, prohibited social contact with Jews, and excluded Jews from participation in government, the arts, and education. Then, Hitler began deporting Jews to internment camps, essentially forcing them to complete slave labor. Some were marched to remote areas and murdered. Eventually, the Germans began a campaign of mass extermination by gassing Jews and other "undesirable" ethnic, religious, and political groups.

Monday, April 20th, marked another historic event. It happened to be the anniversary of Adolph Hitler's birth. When justifying his persecution of the Polish people, Hitler declared "Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?" I, for one, am still speaking about the annihilation of Armenians. I am also speaking about the annihilation of Jews. I encourage my colleagues to join me in speaking out against genocide.

COMMEMORATING THE 94TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, tomorrow, April 24, marks the 94th anniversary of the beginning of the Armenian Genocide. I rise today to commemorate this terrible chapter in human history, and to help ensure that it will never be forgotten.

On April 24, 1915, the Turkish government began to arrest Armenian community and political leaders. Many were executed without ever being charged with crimes. Then the government deported the overwhelming majority of Armenians from Ottoman Armenia, ordering that they resettle in what is now Syria. Most deportees never reached that destination.

From 1915 to 1918, more than a million Armenians died of starvation or disease on long

marches, or were massacred outright by Turkish forces. From 1918 to 1923, Armenians continued to suffer at the hands of the Turkish military, which eventually removed nearly all remaining Armenians from Turkey.

We mark this anniversary of the start of the Armenian Genocide because this tragedy for the Armenian people was a tragedy for all humanity. It is our duty to remember, to speak out and to teach future generations about the horrors of genocide and the oppression and terrible suffering endured by the Armenian people.

We hope the day will soon come when it is not just the survivors who honor the dead but also when those whose ancestors perpetrated the horrors acknowledge their terrible responsibility and commemorate as well the memory of genocide's victims.

Sadly, we cannot say humanity has progressed to the point where genocide has become unthinkable. We have only to recall the killing fields of Cambodia, mass killings in Rwanda, ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Kosovo, and the unspeakable horrors in Darfur, Sudan to see that the threat of genocide persists. We must renew our commitment never to remain indifferent in the face of such assaults on innocent human beings.

We also remember this day because it is a time for us to celebrate the contributions of the Armenian community in America—including hundreds of thousands in California—to the richness of our character and culture. The strength they and their immigrant ancestors have displayed in overcoming tragedy to flourish in this country is an example for all of us. Their success is moving testimony to the truth that tyranny and evil cannot extinguish the vitality of the human spirit.

The United States has an ongoing opportunity to contribute to a true memorial to the past by strengthening Armenia's emerging democracy. We must do all we can through aid and trade to support Armenia's efforts to construct an open political and economic system.

Adolf Hitler, the architect of the Nazi Holocaust, once remarked "Who remembers the Armenians?" The answer is, we do. And we will continue to remember the victims of the 1915–23 genocide because, in the words of the philosopher George Santayana, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

INTRODUCTION OF A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REGARDING THE SHI'ITE PERSONAL STATUS LAW IN AFGHANISTAN

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Mrs. MALONEY. Madam Speaker, today, along with Representatives BALDWIN, and BIGGERT, I am introducing a House Concurrent Resolution which expresses the sense of Congress that the Shi'ite Personal Status Law in Afghanistan violates the fundamental rights of women and should be repealed. Senator BOXER is introducing the same resolution in the Senate.

In March the Afghan parliament approved the Shi'ite Personal Status Law which was

signed by President Hamid Karzai. According to reports in the media and by the United Nations, this law would legalize marital rape, strip mothers of custodial rights in the event of a divorce, and prohibit a woman from leaving her home unless her husband gives his approval. President Obama has called this law "abhorrent" and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights said that the law is "reprehensible and reminiscent of the decrees made by the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in the 1990s."

This resolution urges the Afghan Government and President Karzai to declare these provisions unconstitutional, and to not publish the law on the grounds that it violates the Constitution of Afghanistan and the basic rights of women. Additionally, the resolution encourages the U.S. Government to address the status of women's rights and security in Afghanistan to ensure that these rights are not being eroded.

I have long been a champion for the rights of women internationally, but particularly in Afghanistan. Throughout the country's turbulent history, the women of Afghanistan have been a source of strength, stability, and peace. Working with my colleagues, we have ensured that reconstruction aid for Afghanistan includes support for programs that increase women's access to education, economic opportunities, and health care. We have also worked to increase recognition of the vital role women have to play in rebuilding Afghan society in the wake of violent conflict, and I am pleased that the U.S. government has devoted resources specifically to support the work of local women-led nongovernmental organizations, as well as the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission.

In its current form, the Shi'ite Personal Status Law fundamentally contradicts these efforts. We cannot stand by and allow such an immense setback to the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan, who have been treated as second-class citizens for far too long. For years, the United States has worked with the people and government of Afghanistan to rebuild the rule of law and promote respect for human rights. Creating a new and better future for the women of Afghanistan is a critical part of this mission.

RECOGNIZING THE AMERICAN RED CROSS OF GREATER COLUMBUS

HON. PATRICK J. TIBERI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Mr. TIBERI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the American Red Cross of Greater Columbus. Praised for its dedication to saving and restoring lives, the American Red Cross of Greater Columbus serves over 1.3 million residents in Central Ohio.

Having recently celebrated "Red Cross Month" during March, I am pleased to highlight the successes of the American Red Cross of Greater Columbus. As one of the most trusted charities in Central Ohio, this chapter is at the forefront of helping individuals and families prevent, prepare for, and respond to large and small scale disasters.

Led by Mary Navarro, Michael Carroll and a committed Board of Directors, this group of

over 700 volunteers and 55 full-time employees responded to 356 local disasters in 2008. Their service and assistance directly impacted the lives of over 470 families in Central Ohio.

Educating more than 73,000 individuals about how to prepare for emergencies and training more than 46,000 residents in First Aid, CPR, Water Safety, and other life-saving courses the Greater Columbus Chapter of the American Red Cross is providing much more than relief to victims. The benefit of programs like these provides support to the public beyond times of need.

It is my pleasure to recognize the American Red Cross of Central Ohio for their unrelenting and inspiring record of service to the families of Central Ohio. All have produced a safer place for the residents of Central Ohio to call home.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF THE HONORABLE IRVING J. STOLBERG

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Ms. DeLAURO. Madam Speaker, it is with the heaviest of hearts that I rise today to pay tribute to the memory of one of Connecticut's most outstanding public leaders and my dear friend, The Honorable Irving J. Stolberg. After a year-long fight, Irv lost his battle with leukemia and Connecticut lost one of its most respected and beloved public officials.

Elected to Connecticut's House of Representatives in 1970, Irv served twenty-two years in the General Assembly—a member of virtually every committee and twice elected to lead as Speaker. It was during his tenure as Speaker that the General Assembly saw its greatest transformation with more members seeing legislating as their primary occupation even though it is considered a part-time position and his oversight of the construction of the Legislative Office Building which, after its opening in 1988, gave all legislators their own offices and provided the additional space for public hearings that our historic Capitol building could not accommodate. The very character of the General Assembly was changed with the members finding a stronger voice and taking a more active role in shaping public policy. He has been called the "father of the modern legislature" and there could not be a more fitting tribute to his legacy.

His passion for service stretched far beyond Connecticut politics. A Professor of Geography and African Studies, Irv taught at both Southern Connecticut State University as well as Quinnipiac University. As an Africanist, he did research in Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Nigeria. Most recently, Irv served as the President of the Connecticut Division of the United Nations Association and was most proud of his production of the widely distributed UNA Calendar of Peace. He was a member of the UNA Board of Directors and in 2006 was elected to represent the United States on the Executive Committee of the World Federation of UNAs. His travels took him to more than 90 countries—twenty-two visits to China alone. He helped to develop training programs at American universities for more than 700 Chinese Provincial Officials, assisted in the democratization of Eastern Europe—particularly in Bulgaria—and had a role in drafting the Brazilian